

Concepts and Conceptual Categories Used in Children's Short Stories

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ABSTRACT

One cannot deny the fact that words and concepts are inseparable components of language acquisition. Examining words and conceptual categories gives information about language acquisition and development. In this sense conceptual constructions of the texts used in language development and preschool education have been examined. One of the conceptual classifications in the language acquisition literature is suggested by Clark (1995). This theory is used in the present study.

Vocabulary development in the mother tongue occurs by means of spoken and written texts that children are exposed to. Children see written texts via their parents in the language acquisition process. Types of these texts can be diversified. In this context this study is aimed to categorize concepts in the children's stories which are one of the visual educational materials and to reach the principle findings about lexical hierarchy. The study is mainly based on indirect observation, content analysis and statistical analysis. Data of the study consist of 20 stories for 5;0+ year-old children. Lexical data were transcribed and compiled using Microsoft Excel and then all vocabulary lists were analysed/categorised according to Clark's classification (1995).

In the light of the foregoing information, the research questions are:

- What are the frequency levels of conceptual categories in children's short stories?
- What are the frequency levels of conceptual subcategories in children's short stories?

Findings gained from the database of this study are as follows:

- There are 4606 words in all stories' database, 1606 of which are nouns, the most used category.
- The category of verbs is the second most used category. Verbal categories were divided into two subcategories: states and acts.